GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:392
ANSWERED ON:18.07.2017
Scheme for Agricultural Profession
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated several schemes to turn Agriculture into a profit making profession to increase the income of the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has reviewed the schemes for increasing farmers income;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to extend the benefit of related schemes in agriculture in a better way?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a) to (e): During the last two years, the strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. The Government is realigning its interventions to move from production-centric to farmers' income-centric platform. In order to realise net positive returns for the farmer, reducing cost of cultivation/ production assumes importance, schemes as follows, are being promoted and implemented in a major way towards this:

(i) Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme by which the farmers can know the major and minor nutrients available in their soils which will ensure judicious use of fertiliser application and thus save money of farmers. The balanced use of fertiliser will also enhance productivity and ensure higher returns to the farmers. The second cycle which began from 1st May 2017 is building on the learning of the first cycle so as to improve efficiency and make its use more acceptable by the farmers. As on 27.6.2017, 253.54 lakh soil samples have been collected, 243.91 lakh samples have been tested and a total of 870.17 lakh Soil Health Cards have been distributed to farmers.

(ii) Neem Coated Urea (NCU) is being promoted to regulate use of urea, enhance availability of nitrogen to the crop and reduce cost of fertilizer application. NCU slows down the release of fertilizer and makes it available to the crop in an effective manner. The entire quantity of domestically manufactured and imported urea is now neem coated. The reports from field are
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positive. The expected saving is 10% of urea consumption, thereby resulting in reduced cost of cultivation and improved soil health management.

(iii) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is being implemented with a view to promote organic farming in the country. This will improve soil health and organic matter content and increase net income of the farmer so as to realise premium prices. Under this scheme, an area of 5 lakh acre is targeted to be covered though 10,000 clusters of 50 acre each, from the year 2015-16 to 2017-18. So far 7208 clusters have been formed and remaining clusters would be formed during 2017-18.

(iv) Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) was launched on 1st July, 2015 with the motto of 'Har Khet Ko Paani' for providing end-to-end solutions in irrigation supply chain, comprising water sources, distribution network and farm level applications. PMKSY not only focuses on creating sources for assured irrigation, but also creating protective irrigation by harnessing rain water at micro level through 'Jal Sanchay' and 'Jal Sinchan'. Micro irrigation is also incentivized through subsidy to ensure 'Per drop-More crop'. PMKSY adopts State level planning and projectised execution that allows States to draw up their own irrigation development plans based on District Irrigation Plans and State Irrigation Plans. The target for the year 2016-17 was 8 lakh ha. under micro irrigation against which 8.39 lakh ha. have been covered.

(v) The National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) was launched on 14.04.2016 in 8 States viz. Gujarat, Telangana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand covering 21 markets. The Scheme envisages initiation of e-marketing platform at national level and will support creation of infrastructure to enable e-marketing in 585 regulated markets across the country by March 2018. This innovative market process is revolutionizing agri markets by ensuring better price discovery,

bringing in transparency and competition to enable farmers to get improved remuneration for their produce moving towards 'One Nation One Market'. 455 markets in 13 States have been on boarded as on 30.6.2017.

(vi) Government has introduced Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) from Kharif 2016 to address the risks associated with agriculture. PMFBY addresses all the shortcomings in the earlier schemes and is available to the farmers at very low rates of premium. The farmers will get full insurance cover as there is no capping of sum insured and consequently the claim amount is not cut or reduced. This scheme provides insurance cover at all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks in specified instances. It has been targeted to increase the area coverage to 30% by 2016-17, 40% by 2017-18 and 50% by the end of following year. The first year target has been achieved. The coverage was 390.02 lakh farmers and 386.75 lakh hectares area insured with a sum of Rs. 1,41,883.30 crore during Kharif 2016; and 172.94 lakh farmers and 196.29 lakh hectares area insured with a total sum of Rs. 69,851.37 crore during Rabi 2016-17. The year also brought focus on covering non-loanee farmers under PMFBY along with loanee farmers, for whom the insurance cover is compulsory. The number of non-loanee farmers covered in the year 2016-17 increased to 135 lakh, showing the popularity of the scheme.

(vii) The Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to Rs.3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2016-17, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. In order to discourage distress sale by farmers and to encourage them to store their produce in warehouses against negotiable receipts, the benefit of interest subvention will be
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available to small and marginal farmers having Kisan Credit Card for a further period of upto six months post harvest on the same rate as available to crop loan.

(viii) In addition, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds & Oilpalm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

(ix) MSP is notified for both Kharif & Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs & Prices (CACP). The Commission collects & analyses data on cost of cultivation and recommends MSP. To incentivise cultivation of pulses and oilseeds in the country, Government has announced bonus for Kharif 2017-18, over & above the approved MSP. Even during last year, Government had offered bonus over & above the MSP, in the case of pulses and oilseeds.

(x) Further the Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations'. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the Minimum Price Support Scheme on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

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